

THE WORK OF A CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY IN THE NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION.

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There are twenty-six societies in this Division, twelve of which were registered in 1925. For the purpose of this report the Nainamadama Society has been selected, because it has done the best work among all the societies during the past three years.*

This society was registered on 18th December, 1922. Its area of operations is confined to the following villages:—

Nainamadama, Wennappuwa, Rengamulla, Waikkal, Dummaladeniya, Bolawatte, Kammala and Tambarawila in Pitigal Korale South of the Chilaw District.

MEMBERSHIP.

The number of members on 31st December, 1925 was 190, seven of whom were women. The increase in membership has been rapid. One member has left the society, two have died and their heirs have been elected instead.

	on 1-5-23.	on 1-5-24.	on 1-5-25.	on 31-12-25
Number of members	80	138	168	190
Per cent. increase over 1st year		72.5	110	137.5

PAID-UP SHARE CAPITAL.

The total paid-up share capital at the end of 1925 was Rs. 3,763, or Rs. 19-80 per member.

2 members	have paid	Rs. 250/- each.	
2	" " " between	Rs. 115/- and Rs. 100/- each	
12	" " " " "	" 100/- " " 50/- "	
36	" " " " "	" 50/- " " 25/- "	
17	" " " " "	" 25/- " " 15/- "	
121	" " " " "	" 10/- " " 1/- "	

62.6 per cent. or nearly two-thirds of the members, mostly poor villagers; have each paid less than Rs. 10/-

	on 1-5-23.	on 1-5-24.	on 1-5-25.	on 31-12-25
Paid-up Share Capital	Rs. 1,919/-	Rs. 2,520/-	Rs. 3,263/-	Rs. 3,763/-
Per cent. increase over 1st year		31.5	70.3	96.5

A sum of Rupees sixty-seven is only required to double the first year's share capital.

DEPOSITS.

Only Rs. 9-00 have been deposited in the society in 1925.

LOANS.

The profits of the society have mostly been derived from loans granted to members.

		1-5-23	1-5-24	1-5-25	31-12-25
Loans granted	... Rs.	1,080.36	4,344.76	8,961.76	12,999.76
Loans Recovered	... Rs.	33.34	2,382.28	5,621.78	8,799.48
Loans outstanding	... Rs.	1,047.02	3,009.50	6,349.48	10,544.48
Loans overdue	... Rs.	nil	nil	nil	

The figures under 31-12-25 show the total amount of loans given recovered and outstanding for the past three years. The purposes for which these loans have been granted were as follows:—

	No. of Loans	Total Amount
1. Coconut cultivation ...	5	810 00
2. Releasing mortgages, etc. ...	4	425 00
3. Tobacco cultivation ...	15	1,076 00
4. Purchasing carts and bulls ...	9	995 00
5. Acquisition of land ...	7	705 00
6. Making bricks ...	2	400 00
7. Burning lime ...	4	800 00
8. Trade in coconuts ...	18	2,800 00
9. Petty trade in rice, curry-stuffs, etc. ...	18	2,510 00
10. Purchasing thread to weave nets ...	75	1,088 76
11. Repairing fishing nets, repairing or purchasing catamarans ...	12	405 00
12. Miscellaneous items		
a. manufacturing aerated waters ...	4	700 00
b. extracting of coir fibre ...	1	200 00
c. purchasing a bicycle ...	1	60 00
d. opening a barber's saloon ...	1	25 00
	<u>176</u>	<u>12,999 76</u>

It will be seen that loans can be divided into three groups, those for agricultural purposes, those for trade and those given to assist the fisher folks. Agricultural loans have been given for coconut and tobacco cultivations and for the repayment of mortgages. Many cultivators would not have carried on tobacco cultivation without the Society's aid, and coconut cultivation is being improved through its agency.

MANURES.

Before the registration of the society, its members did not apply more than Rs. 200 worth of artificial manure per annum to their coconut gardens. During the past three years, forty-five tons, one hundredweight and seventeen pounds of manure were secured by the society for fifty-six applicants costing Rs. 6,536-49 as follows:—

	lb.		lb.
Castor cake ..	6,069	Fish guano ..	5,040
Fish manure ..	10,168	Bone meal ..	13,444
Steamed bone meal ..	36,400	Eposphosphate ..	1,900
Basic slag ..	3,874	Nitrate of soda ..	9,860
Sulphate of potash ..	1,698	Sulphate of ammonia .	650
Kainit ..	2,900	Animal meal ..	252
Superphosphate ..	1,297	Meat meal ..	1,500
Muriate of potash ..	5,377	Sylvinit ..	500
		Total ..	<u>100,929</u>

BARBED WIRE.

Three small consignments of barbed wire were ordered by the society from Messrs. Hunter & Co.

	1923—24	1924—25	1925	Total
Barbed wire	6 cwt.	14 cwt.	5 cwt.	25 cwt.
Value	Rs. 137'07	Rs. 342'36	Rs. 74'00	Rs. 553'43

PROFITS AND RESERVE FUND.

The expenses of the society have been small.

	1922—23	1923—24	1924—25	1st May to Dec. 31st 1925	Total
Expenses ...	Rs. 7'13	1'65	8'40	18'66	35'84
Reserve Fund ...	Rs. -	175'33	151'87	-	327'20
Profits carried forward	Rs. -	-	168'92	302'98	471'90
				Total gross profit ...	834'94

The Reserve Fund now stands at Rs. 327.20. A further sum of Rs. 49.30 has to be added to the reserve fund to make it one-tenth of the paid-up share capital. It is then possible for the society out of its balance profits, which are estimated to be Rs. 422 at the end of December, 1925, to grant a bonus to members. Due to efficient management the society has earned over 21 per cent. interest on its paid-up share capital during the past three years and has materially assisted the agricultural industries of its members. The thanks of the society are due to Mr. D. Peter Perera for the very efficient way in which he has carried out his duties as Secretary for the past three years.

DISCUSSION.

MUHANDIRAM N. WICKRAMARATNE offered some remarks in supplementing to what was said of the Society already. He said that the Society obtained analysis of cattle manures of various types found in the villages and also of cattle urine. The late Mr. M. Kelway Bamber, who took an interest in these societies, made these analyses for the Society. These results would not only be useful to the members of the Society but also to the big coconut planters. But the most noteworthy work done by the Society he said was the successful way it fought the ordinary money-lender and the pawnbroker. According to figures supplied by the official authorities there were 46 pawnbrokers and 174 village banks (mudal pettiya) in the Pitigal Korale South; most of these were not reliable. He gave an instance of a man running one of these banks who was not even able to add a few figures, not to speak of keeping accounts. He appealed to those well-to-do people there to take an interest in the organisation and the working of Co-operative Societies so as to enable the poor villager to make a living.

THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE said that the paper was placed on the Agenda to show how these Societies could help agriculturists in general, as the Nainamadama Society had done. The success of the Society was entirely due to the efforts of the Secretary, Mr. D. Peter Perera. The Society was intended for the ordinary man and there was no doubt it would be of continued benefit to the cultivator. He concluded by saying that the success of any Co-operative Credit Society depended entirely on the efforts of the Office Bearers and Committee Members of the different Societies.